

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Paragraph and Subject</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Trans. No.</u>
<u>Chapter 1-200 Processing Mail</u>			
Table of Contents.	i	06/02	02/01
1 Purpose and Scope.	1	06/02	02/01
2 Mail and File Staff.	1	06/02	02/01
3 Types of Mail.	1	06/02	02/01
4 Initial Sort	3	06/02	02/01
5 Opening and Date- Stamping Mail.	3	06/02	02/01
6 Identifying Case Locations.	4	06/02	02/01
7 Searching Mail	5	06/02	02/01
8 Outgoing Mail.	7	06/02	02/01

1. Purpose and Scope. This chapter describes the procedures for processing mail. Instructions are provided concerning how to sort, open and date-stamp incoming mail. In addition, procedures for searching mail and processing outgoing mail are listed.

2. Mail and File Staff. These individuals process mail received in the DO. They use the query function in ECMS to obtain case numbers, case locations, and to determine the responsible claims examiners.

3. Types of Mail. Most mail is received via the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). However, some mail is received by private overnight mail service, by facsimile transmission (fax), and by hand-delivery. Mail is grouped as follows:

a. Priority Correspondence. The Department of Labor (DOL) considers mail to/from the following parties to be priority correspondence:

- (1) The President and White House Staff
- (2) The Vice President and members of the Vice President's staff
- (3) The President Pro Tempore of the Senate
- (4) The Speaker of the House of Representatives
- (5) Other Members of Congress
- (6) Members of the Cabinet
- (7) Heads of independent Federal establishments
- (8) Governors of States
- (9) Foreign government officials (Prime Ministers, Cabinet-level officers, Ambassadors, etc.)
- (10) Directors/Managers of employee organizations

3. Types of Mail. (Continued)

(11) Directors/Managers of national and international labor organizations

(12) Members of the press

(13) Requests made under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts

b. Primary Claim Forms. These forms, which contain information on new claims, include:

(1) EE-1, Claim for Employee Benefits

(2) EE-2, Claim for Survivor Benefits

(3) A letter with words of claim

c. Bills. Form OWCP-1500 (HCFA-1500) is normally used to bill the OWCP for medical services and supplies. Hospital bills are usually submitted on Form UB-92. Pharmacy bills are submitted on the Universal Claim Form. The EE-915 may be used for employee reimbursement of medical expenses. These will normally be transferred directly to the medical bill processing contractor.

d. Routine Mail. This includes a variety of mail. Designated claims staff will screen their routine mail, which consists of:

(1) Letters from claimants and their representatives, including affidavits.

(2) Letters from the Department of Energy, contractors, and/or subcontractors;

(3) Information from the Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health(NIOSH)or the Department of Justice (DOJ);

(4) Medical reports from attending physicians;

3. Types of Mail. (Continued)

(5) Mail from contractual sources, including medical reports from second opinion and referee specialists; and

(6) Requests for information from other Federal, state, and local government agencies.

e. Other Mail. This includes mail which does not concern specific claims.

4. Initial Sort. The Mail and File (M&F) Clerk should separate certain envelopes from the rest of the incoming mail, as follows:

a. Mail for Delivery Without Opening. This mail includes:

(1) Certified mail (the M&F Clerk will need to sign a receipt for the USPS);

(2) Mail for the Regional Director or District Director;

(3) Material from the National Office; and

(4) Mail marked "Do not open in Mail Room" or the like (at DO option).

b. Mail for a Party Outside of the OWCP. If the party is located in the same building, the mail should be delivered to him or her. If not, it should be returned to the USPS unopened.

5. Opening and Date-Stamping Mail.

a. Opening Mail. The M&F Clerk should:

(1) Check the contents of each envelope carefully to ensure that all contents are removed. If an EE-1 or EE-2 form or a request for an oral hearing or a review of the written record is submitted, the envelope should be kept and attached to the former request.

5. Opening and Date Stamping Mail. (Continued)

(2) Circle the case number.

b. Date-Stamping Mail. The date-stamp prints the location of the receiving DO and the year, month, day and time of receipt by OWCP on incoming mail. All mail must be date-stamped before leaving the Mail-Room. The M&F Clerk should date-stamp each item of mail on the front of the item. If there are multiple pages of mail, each item must be date-stamped individually. The date stamp should reflect the actual date of receipt, even if the mail is not opened on the date of receipt.

(1) If an ink stamp is used, the stamp should not be placed over any writing.

(2) If an ink stamp is used, the stamp may be placed on the back of a form if it will not be legible on the front.

(3) The stamp machine should be secured when not in use.

6. Identifying Case Locations. The M&F Clerk must determine the location to place each piece of mail before searching for cases.

a. Unnumbered Mail. If the mail does not contain a case number, the M&F Clerk should find the number by using the NameSearch option in the Query function (see ECMS Users Manual).

(1) If a match is found, the M&F Clerk should note the case number, current location code, and responsible claims examiner in the upper right corner of the mail. Then place the piece of mail in the proper location to be sorted and attached.

(2) If a match is not found, the M&F Clerk should write "NID" (not in database) in the upper right corner and give it to the appropriate Supervisor or Team Leader who will need to decide whether to create a case, route the mail within the DO without creating a case, or return it to the sender.

6. Identifying Case Locations. (Continued)

b. Numbered Mail. If the mail contains a case number, the M&F Clerk should use the Case Search function in Query to obtain the current location and responsible claims examiner and note it in the upper right corner of the mail.

(1) If an error message is received when the case number is entered, the M&F Clerk should use the Name Search function in Query to verify that the mail contains the proper number. If it does not, the M&F Clerk should note the correct number on the mail.

(2) If the correct case number cannot be identified, the M&F Clerk should give the mail to the appropriate individual. See paragraph 6.a(2).

c. Mail for Transferred or Loaned Cases. Should be collected and forwarded on a daily basis by certified mail or by private overnight mail service.

d. Mail for Other DOs. Should be collected and forwarded on a daily basis by certified mail or by private overnight mail service.

7. Searching Mail. After checking the mail for case number and location, the M&F Clerk handles it according to type.

a. Groups of Mail. After date-stamping the mail, the M&F Clerk should sort it into the following groups.

(1) Priority Correspondence. The M&F Clerk should hand-carry the letter with the case file to the person (DO option) handling priority correspondence as soon as possible.

(2) Primary Claim Forms. Unless a case has already been created and coded, a new case will need to be created (see EEOICPA PM 1-300.) The M&F Clerk then keys and delivers it to the claims unit, sorted according to responsible Claims Examiner.

7. Searching Mail. (Continued)

(3) Bills. Bills for medical services and supplies should be forwarded to the medical bill processing unit in Lanham, MD, unless otherwise marked for forwarding to the CE.

(4) Routine Mail. Should be sorted by responsible claims examiner and delivered to each claims unit. At DO option, the following kinds of mail may be delivered directly to the Fiscal Unit for processing:

(a) Third party actions.

(b) Requests for action when a check was lost or an EFT (electronic funds transfer) was never received.

(c) Transactions or other documents from the Department of the Treasury.

(5) Other Mail.

(a) General inquiries may include questions about the OWCP's practices and requests for technical assistance. Letters in this category will be routed according to DO policy.

(b) Interoffice memorandums should be routed according to the party addressed.

b. Searching and Placing Mail. Mail screened by the CEs should be searched each day and properly placed in case files.

(1) When mail is placed, the case files may remain where they are, or given to the person working at that location, according to local practice.

(2) The M&F Clerk should not remove a case file from its location without notifying the person responsible for it. The M&F Clerk must enter a location change in ECMS for any case that is moved.

8. Outgoing Mail. Outgoing mail is processed as follows:

- a. Envelopes. All envelopes must show the addressee's ZIP code. Some post offices require a further separation of local mail, and such requirements must be honored.
- b. Heavy Envelopes and Packages. Such parcels must be securely wrapped with heavy-duty plastic tape. Likewise, boxes of case files must be packed securely.
- c. Postage. A postage meter is used to affix postage. Airmail letters for overseas delivery will be bundled separately from regular mail.
- d. Registered and Certified Mail. These types of mail are processed according to USPS regulations and the procedures established in each district office.
- e. Overnight Express Mail. The services of the designated contractor may be used according to the practices of the DO.